

Sex Offender Management Board Website

According to the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), effectively managing sex offenders is one of the top criminal justice concerns nationwide. Successfully supervising and treating sex offenders is contingent upon several factors, which include recognizing the diverse population, collaboration within the sex offender supervision team, evidence-based assessment tools that assist with case management strategies, well-designed and implemented evidence-based treatment programs, supervision tools that enhance community safety, and sex offender specific training for supervision officers. On July 5, 2007, the Delaware General Assembly passed legislation (11 Del. C. §4120A) that created a Sex Offender Management Board (SOMB) with the vision of decreasing sexual victimization and increasing community safety. The board is charged with expanding and oversight of sexual offender management policies and practices statewide. Some of the SOMB's duties are to set standards for sex offender supervision, psychosexual evaluations and sex offender treatment, post-conviction polygraphs, and establish and implement protocols for sex offender supervision and classification.

What is sexual abuse?

Sexual abuse includes many different behaviors. For adults, it consists of any sexual act committed against someone without that person's freely given consent. For adults incapable of giving consent and children, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention definition includes "any completed or attempted (non-completed) sexual act, sexual contact with or exploitation (i.e., noncontact sexual interaction) of a child" by an adult or an older youth. Sexual abuse includes touching (e.g., forced sexual intercourse, child molestation, groping, and attempted rape) and non-touching offenses (e.g., downloading or distributing child pornography, exhibitionism), and it impacts people of all ages. Learning the facts about sexual abuse is one way to raise awareness and identify prevention strategies to increase safety.

How common is sexual abuse?

Sexual abuse affects everyone: of all ages, races, and ethnicities in all areas of the country. As many as 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 20 boys experience sexual abuse before age 18. Individuals 18-24 have among the highest rates of sexual abuse. And even individuals later in life may be vulnerable to sexual abuse. Among all ages, the adult, teen, or child who is harmed often knows their abuser, including family members, intimate partners, fellow residents, or care providers. Over their lifetime, nearly 1 in 5 women and 1 in 71 men reported experiencing rape at some time. Approximately 45% of women and 22% of men reported experiencing sexual violence other than rape, such as being made to penetrate someone else, sexual coercion, unwanted sexual contact, or noncontact unwanted sexual experiences in their lifetime.

Who are the people who sexually abuse?

Research establishes that registered sex offenders are a small percentage of those who have committed some form of sexual abuse. We have learned from known sex offenders that not all people who sexually abuse are the same, and adolescents are very different from adults who sexually offend. When one looks at child sexual abuse through this broader lens, we see that 30-50 percent of youth are sexually abused by other juveniles. We know that most people who sexually abuse are known to the victim. It's essential to recognize the issue's complexity and how common it can be so that we have the urgency and the ability to develop a comprehensive, effective response.

What is Meghan's Law?

Megan's Laws are named for Megan Kanka, a seven-year-old girl from New Jersey who was sexually assaulted and murdered in 1994 by a neighbor who, unknown to the victim's family, had been previously convicted for sex offenses against children. Megan's Laws are state and federal statutes that require convicted sex offenders to register with local police. Sex offenders are required to register with local police and to notify law enforcement authorities whenever they move to a new location. The statutes establish a notification process to provide information about sex offenders to law enforcement agencies and, when appropriate, to the public. The type of notification is based on an evaluation of the risk to the community from a particular offender.

Myth vs. Fact

- **Myth:** All registered sex offenders are automatically restricted from having contact with minor children.

Fact: Restrictions regarding contact with minors may be imposed as a special condition of a court order or probation supervision. Delaware Code alone does not prohibit convicted sex offenders from having contact with minors.

- **Myth:** Strangers commit most sexual assaults.

Fact: Most sexual assaults and rapes are committed by someone the victim knows. Some data suggests more than half (51.1%) of female victims of rape reported being raped by an intimate partner and 40.8% by an acquaintance; for male victims, more than half (52.4%) reported being raped by an acquaintance, and 15.1% by a stranger. <https://www.nsvrc.org/statistics>

- **Myth:** All registered sex offenders have child victims.

Fact: Research has shown that while most sexual assault victims are minors, not all victims are under 18. One in 3 female rape victims were sexually assaulted between 11-

17 years old and 1 in 8 reported that it occurred before age 10. Nearly 1 in 4 male rape victims experienced it for the first time between 11-17 years old and about 1 in 4 reported that it occurred before age

10. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/sexualviolence/fastfact.html>

- **Myth:** All sex offenders will always re-offend sexually.

Fact: Research indicates that sex offenders are far more likely to re-offend for a non-sexual crime than a sexual crime, so policies designed to increase public safety should also be concerned with the likelihood of sex offenders re-offending with crimes other than sex offenses. Research comparing the recidivism rates of sex offenders with those of non-sex offenders has consistently found that sex offenders have lower overall recidivism rates than non-sex offenders; however, child molesters, rapists, and sex offenders are far more likely than non-sex offenders to re-offend with a sexual crime. The sexual recidivism rates of sex offenders range from about 3 percent after three years to approximately 24 percent after 15 years. The highest recidivism rates have been found among child molesters who offend against boys. Comparatively lower recidivism rates have been found for rapists, child molesters who victimize girls, and incest offenders. Female sex offenders have lower rates of recidivism than male sex offenders. <https://www.ojp.gov/>

- **Myth:** Sex offenders cannot be rehabilitated and successfully reintegrated into society.

Fact: Registered sex offenders can find employment, obtain housing, attend college, attend houses of worship, and can participate in community events. While there are often barriers for the sex offender to overcome in each of these areas, it is possible to engage in normative and prosocial community functioning. If you are a registered sex offender and need assistance in any of these areas, your probation officer is a good resource for obtaining suggestions regarding how to achieve your goals.

Resources:

Delaware Sex Offender Central Registry - <https://sexoffender.dsp.delaware.gov/>

Delaware Code and Sex Offender Registration laws - <https://delcode.delaware.gov/title11/c041/sc03/>

Delaware SENTAC Benchbook - <https://cjc.delaware.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/61/2022/02/SENTAC-Benchbook-2021-22-Final.pdf>

Sex offender treatment provider credentialing requirements - <https://regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/title1/1100/1100.shtml>)

Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA) - <https://www.atsa.com/>

National Institute of Corrections - <https://nicic.gov/projects/sex-offenders>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention -
<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/sexualviolence/fastfact.html>

ATSA 2020 policy papers - <https://www.atsa.com/policy-papers>

Center for Sex Offender Management (CSOM) - <https://cepp.com/project/center-for-sex-offender-management-csom/>

National Center for Sexual Behavior of Youth - <https://www.ncsby.org/>

Stop It Now - <https://www.stopitnow.org/>

8 Things Everyone Should Know About Sexual Abuse and Sexual Offender -
<https://www.atsa.com/pdfs/Policy/8ThingsEveryoneShouldKnow.pdf>

Sexual Violence Prevention Fact Sheet - <https://www.atsa.com/sexual-violence-prevention-fact-sheet>